



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE HONORS AND SUPPORTS VETERANS, ACTIVE MILITARY AND THEIR FAMILIES *New Initiatives and Year-round efforts to be highlighted during month of May*

TRENTON (May 10, 2012) – The Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (GCADA) is very pleased to pledge its support for New Jersey's veterans, active military and their families as well as to honor their service to the United States of America. The Council has chosen the month of May which includes the annual observance of Memorial Day, a day of remembering the men and women who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces, to announce new initiatives and year-round efforts in support of veterans, active military, and their families.

"We would like to thank and recognize the members of the GCADA Military and Veterans Committee for their contribution to GCADA's extraordinary efforts" said Neil Van Ess, GCADA Acting Chairman, "As a combat wounded Vietnam veteran, and as the New Jersey State Commander for the Military Order of Purple Heart, my pride in the GCADA has grown knowing that it cares enough to reach out and find a way to help today's heroes, our military service personnel and their families who are paying the price for our nation's freedom, security and comfort. "

The GCADA's new initiatives and year-long efforts include:

Resource Guide

Available immediately, the Council has published its second edition of its well received "*Resource Guide for Military, Veterans and Families*". Initially published in 2009, the just published 369-page edition has added more than 250 pages of additional resources and information related to support assistance; housing; employment and training; women assistance programs; education and grants; and health care.

To date, fifteen thousand Guides have been distributed. Hard copies of the Resource Guide are available by request. The Guides are also available for download from the Council's website, www.state.nj.us/treasury/gcada/.

Webinar

GCADA will be hosting a May 17th webinar which will highlight the availability of the Family of Heroes training to the more than 400,000 veteran family members in New Jersey. The webinar is an avatar-based PTSD and resiliency training for families of veterans and service members.

The webinar is being held in association with the Veterans Administration NY/NJ Veterans Healthcare Network as well as Kognito Interactive. It will teach how this resource can support families in gaining skills and knowledge in what to expect from their veteran's return; what is post-deployment stress and how to identify it; and, what local support services and resources are available in a specified area. To learn more or register, please go to <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/584666129>.

New Jersey Veterans Enhancement Services Coalition

The Council played a leading role in the establishment of the New Jersey Veterans Services Enhancement Coalition (V-SEC). The Coalition is co-chaired by Raymond L. Zawacki, Deputy Commissioner at the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA) and Nick Petrozzino, GCADA State Alliance Coordinator who is also a Vietnam Veteran.

In 2010, New Jersey was one of ten states chosen to attend the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Policy Academy after a successful application by the Council. Through the Academy an interagency team developed a strategic plan to strengthen New Jersey's behavioral health care systems for service members, veterans, and their Families. The team also committed to sustaining and expanding the teams, and implementing and enhancing the plan which led to the establishment of the Coalition.

Some notable efforts by V-SEC members include: Operation College Promise, a consortium of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities collaborating to enhance Veteran Student Success on Campus; the New Jersey Veterans Assistance Project (VAP), a combined effort of the Judiciary, DMVA, NJ Department of Human Services, Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services that seeks to identify veterans needing referral to community resources early in their entry to the criminal justice system; and, Veterans Outreach by Sergeant Joe Nyzio, DMVA Veterans Service Officer who also works with UMDNJ's Vet2Vet, a 24/7 peer-to-peer Veterans hotline.

Military and Veterans Committee

The GCADA's newly adopted by-laws established a Military and Veterans sub-committee of the Council's Policy and Planning Committee. The newly established subcommittee is to review and advise the Council regarding alcoholism and drug abuse prevention, treatment, recovery as well as other initiatives for active military, veterans and military families.

The subcommittee is to also coordinate and collaborate with state, county and federal agencies, and veterans' organizations to identify gaps and best-practices in alcoholism and drug abuse services for active military, veterans and military families as well as to make recommendations to fill these gaps and regarding these best-practices. Individuals interested in serving on the subcommittee can contact the Council to learn more.

The Council, leading the way for healthy and safe communities, is statutorily authorized and empowered to review and coordinate all State departments' efforts in regard to the planning and provision of treatment, prevention, research, evaluation, and education services for, and public awareness of, alcoholism and drug abuse. It also administers the State's \$10 million Alliance to Prevent Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Program, which is the largest network of community-based anti-drug coalitions in the nation, which has nearly 400 Alliances encompassing more than 500 municipalities which involve thousands of individuals and stakeholders who have made it their passion and commitment to create healthy and safe communities throughout New Jersey.